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SOURCE Hsin-sheng Wan-pao.

COMMUNIST NEWSPAPERS HAVE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

Taihoku, 31 October (UP indicated) -- A report from Shanghai states that Shanghai Communist newspapers are falling into financial difficulties and experiencing a marked decrease in circulation. Of the six papers, the Hsin-wen Jih-pao has receipts that balance its expenditures, but the party mouthpiece, Chieh-fang Jih-pao, is operating at a great loss. The Shanghai offices of the Ta Kung Pao and the Wen-hui Pao are abjectly inquiring if their Hong Kong offices can offer employment to those who are about to be laid off. Having received unfavorable responses, the Shanghai offices have no choice but to discharge one third of their employees, and yet the accountants still foresee serious financial difficulties ahead.

This loss of revenue, readers, and reputation is due to the fact that they only print news that is officially issued, dry documentary material, and accounts of occurrences of no interest. Shanghai people say they have no newspapers, only "viewpapers" which express official views. Another reason for the steady decline in number of readers of the Communist papers is because Shanghai is the only place on the China mainland where short-wave radio reception is not prohibited. A large portion of Shanghai residents listen in the morning or at night to fresh radio news from foreign sources or from the National government's broadcasting station on Taiwan.

According to latest estimates, the Hsin-sheng Jih-pao /presumably pro-Communist, since its publication is permitted/, the largest selling daily in Shanghai has a circulation of 120,000, while the Chieh-fang Jih-pao has a circulation of 80,000 only because it is required reading for government workers, social agencies, schools, and colleges. As for the Ta Kung Pao, Wen-hui Pao, Hsin-min Pao, and the English-language Shanghai Daily, they have an aggregate circulation of only 80,000.

The scarcity of newsprint is another reason for the newspapers' financial difficulties. It is estimated that present supplies of newsprint are sufficient for only 4 months longer. The British paper North China Daily News is still being published, but those who have inside knowledge say it is being run at a loss.

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